Touching the Education Department, it was the Member's view that, constituted as it was at present, it would not work smoothly. The staff for control and inspection was more than sufficient and, with the appointment of a Deputy Director of Public Instruction in special charge of Elementary Education, the time had come for the abolition of the Directorship of Public Instruction and placing the whole department under a competent Secretariat Officer in the Huzur Office.

The Public Works Department, the Member contended, was overstaffed. One Executive Engineer could be diverted to the Agricultural Department as Agricultural Engineer and asked to work in collaboration with the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries to examine and report to Government about the real condition of the hundreds of irrigation tanks which had become useless on account of various causes and the measures necessary to restore them. He could also help the department to instal machinery and pumps in several places and thus reclaim vast areas which were lying fallow. The various works connected with roads and their maintenance could be separated from building works, so that the people might be benefited to a larger extent than they were now. Another matter to which attention might be usefully directed was the allotment of public funds, which was not satisfactory now. Those who were further away from the capital at present got only a very small share.

With a view to remove the above defects, the Member suggested the creation of an Efficiency Audit Department as in Mysore and defined the following as its main functions :—

(1) Preparing schemes for new departments and reorganizing existing departments ;

(2) Maintaining all the departments on a uniform level of efficiency and purity ;

(3) Finding out the causes of defects, whether due to the *personnel* of the departments or the system of work, and devising necessary remedies ;

(4) Preventing the great delay in the disposal of business;

(5) Making Administrative Audit more effective ;

(6) Inquiring into charges of corruption and reporting them to the Head of the Department or to the Government ; and

(7) Preparation of Statistics.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's speech is very interesting. The several suggestions made by him will be carefully noted for consideration.

2. Need for increased allotment of public funds to rural areas, especially for communications, and for the creation of local bodies, at least one in each taluk, to make suggestions in respect of local needs.

Mr. C. P. Thomas, B. A., L. T. (Member, Nominated) said that one of the defects of Government in India before the advent of the British was that public funds were mostly spent in capital cities to the great prejudice of localities in rural areas. He quoted the present Bishop of Travancore and Cochin, who had publicly given expression to his view that, unlike other Native States in Northern India, the condition of the villages in Travancore was far more satisfactory. Though a good deal had been done in Travancore in pushing forward the interests of the rural population, much more remained to be done. He was not of the opinion that the revenues collected from a particular Division or Taluk should be utilized for such area alone. The objective of Government ought, no doubt, to be the welfare of the whole State. But, in carrying out that general principle, the Government should try to maintain a fair proportion between the contribution of local areas to the public funds and the expenditure from the same. Though the expenditure on public works throughout the various Divisions was not well distributed about 12 years ago, the same could not be said now. On the representations of the various Members of the Assembly at its successive sessions, a greater degree of fair distribution had been attained. Still, the needs of several taluks had not yet received the consideration

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they deserved. He did not question the fact that some institutions and public works at head-quarters should be regarded as common to the whole administrative area. But it was no justification for the apparent lack of contribution from general funds to the requirements of villages. The real explanation for such a state of affairs was that the rural population had not as much access to the powers-that-be as their more favoured brethren in the urban areas.

A most laudable feature of the educational progress of the State was that not less than 3½ lakhs of rupees had been voluntarily contributed in 2 or 3 years by the people. It would be interesting to know, the Member continued, what proportion of that amount came from towns. He was afraid it would be hardly more than 5%. Such disproportion in the expenditure of the people's money as between those in villages and towns was unjustifiable. The opening of Relief Schools had, to a certain extent, removed that unfairness and had made the residents in towns also to contribute towards the building fund. But the principle of the equitable distribution of the State finances ought to be more widely accepted.

In regard to the means of communication also, the same absence of equitable distribution existed. People in towns were given roads just to avoid circuitous routes, while those in the villages were not given even their minimum requirements. The latter were, further, asked to reduce land compensation or in some cases even to give it up altogether, whenever a necessity was felt for roads for them.

The Member then went on to give specific instances of differential treatment accorded to the people of towns and villages in the matter of school-buildings and other local wants. His suggestion to remove the defect was that some arrangements should be made in preparing the budget to see that each of the Divisions in the State got a fair allotment of the money to be spent for public needs. To attain the object in view, it would be better to consider the Departmental budgets as tentative, publish them as such for public criticism, and then include them in the State Budget with suitable modifications in the light of the objections, if any. The equitable distribution of the allotted amount to the various Divisions, Taluks and Villages might be done by the District Boards, Taluk Boards and Village Unions, the formation of which was proposed by the Member as a *Shashtipurthi* boon of His Highness the Maha Rajah. The two principles which he laid down as worthy of being followed in establishing the local bodies were, firstly, that the allotment of public funds for a local area should, as a rule, be determined by its contribution to those funds and also by its readiness to raise its own funds for local needs, and, secondly, that there should be a recognized organization in each area—from a Division to a Village or groups thereof—through whom the authorities should ascertain the views of the people concerned with regard to local conditions and needs. When the people in a place combined and made a systematic effort for supplying local needs with regard to industries, means of communication, education, sanitation and the like, Government should come forward and recognise the local bodies and help them on. In conclusion, the Member requested the early and favourable consideration of his proposals by Government.

To the Dewan's enquiry as to whether the people would be ready to contribute towards the local funds, the Member said that they might not be willing.

Dewan.—Local Boards, to be of use to the people and the Government, should be placed on a *statutory* basis; then only will they be efficient. Year after year requests are made in this Assembly for roads, canals and other public needs. They are all, no doubt, reasonable in themselves, but it is impossible to comply with every one of these requests. The levy of a local cess will be some relief to Government in small matters. But in important works Government aid will have to be invoked.

Member.—Even if local boards are constituted, the complaint that public revenue is not being properly apportioned among the local bodies will arise. My request, therefore, is that efficient arrangements should be made to ensure an equitable distribution of the revenue among the Divisions, Taluks and Villages. The levy of a local cess will not meet this complaint, because the cess raised in any local area will only go to the local funds of that area and not to the public revenue.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's suggestions will be considered.

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